

THE SEALWOMAN'S CROON from "*The Road to the Isles*"; Kenneth MacLeod.

The seals are the children of the King of Lochlann under spells. Beauty, wisdom, and bravery were in their blood as well as in their skins, and that was why their stepmother took the hate of destruction for them...Seven long years did she spend with a namely magician, a- learning of the black art. Did not the terrible carlin put her stepchildren under eternal spells, that they should be half fish , half beast, so long as waves would beat on the shores of Lochlann!..

Sure you would know by the very eyes of the seals that there was kingly blood in them... Three times in the year, when the full moon is brightest, the seals must go back to their own natural state (*human*), whether they wish to or no. This was so that there would be envy and sorrow in the hearts every time they saw others ruling in the kingdom which is theirs by right of blood.

And if you were to see one of them as they should be (*human*)....you would take the love of your heart for that one, and if weddings were in your thoughts, SURE ENOUGH! A wedding there would be.

Long ago, and not so long ago either, a man in Canna was shore-wandering on an autumn night and the moon was full, and did he not see one of the seal Lady-Lords washing herself in a streamlet that was meeting the waves. And just as I said, he took the love of his heart for her and he went and put a deep sleep on her with a charm.. and carried her home in his arms. But och! och! When the wakening came, what had he before him but a seal! And though he needed all the goodness he had, love put softening in his heart, and he carried her down to the sea and let her swim away to her own kith and kin, where she ought to be.

And she spent that night, it is said, on a reef near the shore singing like a daft mavis, and this is one of her croons- indeed all the seals are good at the songs, and though they are really of the race of Lochlann, it is the gaelic they like best.

.”Pillowed on the sea wrack, brown am I,
On the gleaming white sheen- sand, O-hee!
Lulled by sweet croon of waves, I lie-
Nor slumber deep - part thee and me ?

Far away my own seal- mate lone
On the foaming green grey reefs, O, hee!
Lies and ‘tis the cause of all my moan
That slumber deep took thee from me.

On the morrow shall I o’er the sound,
O’er the gleaming white sheen-sand, O hee!
Swim until I reach my ‘*grayhan down*’
Nor slumber deep part thee and me.

